



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Environmental Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DNR traces fish kill to Poweshiek County poultry operation

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MALCOM—DNR staff spent two days in the field looking for the source of a fish kill on Little Bear Creek one mile west of Malcom.

The fish had been dead for some time when the fish kill was reported Sept. 11. Stopping at bridge crossings to test water and hiking through a corn field, DNR staff found high ammonia levels in storm water runoff from Fremont Farms northwest of Malcom. A second source of storm water runoff was found at stockpiles at the nearby Jerry Axmear farm.

Overfull manure storage at the egg laying facility caused a leak from one of the buildings, where manure was exposed to rainfall. Manure was contained at the farm, but the runoff had high ammonia levels which flowed to the creek.

Fremont Farm managers blocked culverts and runoff near the building. They also flushed culverts to prevent more runoff from reaching the creek. Axmear plans to land apply manure onto a field within a few days.

DNR staff found dead fish for about three miles along the creek banks. They collected water samples for laboratory analysis.

DNR staff will monitor cleanup and consider appropriate enforcement action.

Fish and other aquatic animals like crayfish and beneficial insects are more vulnerable during warm weather, when water temperatures are high and oxygen levels may be low. When already stressed, aquatic animals are more susceptible to pollutants.

Please report fish kills to DNR [field offices](#) or to the 24-hour spill line at 515-725-8594 immediately.